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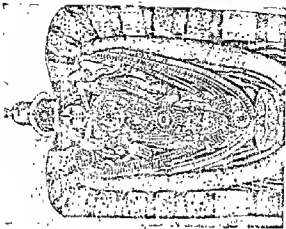
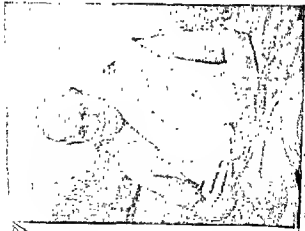
On Iśa & Kēnī Upanishads



By Swami Dhinatasana

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Dedicated to Lord Venkateswara of Seven Hills by the



ISAVASYA UPANISHAD

This Upanishad is otherwise known as the Vajasaneyi Upanishad. It is also a Mantropanishad containing eighteen Mantras. It is the last and fortieth chapter of the Sukla Yajurveda. Either of the two Madhyandina and Kanva schools constituting Sukla Yajurveda has got this Upanishad within its fold. All the preceding thirty-nine chapters of the Yajurveda in question depict the Karma Kanda. The last and fortieth chapter treats of Jnana Kanda and it is known as Isavasya Upanishad. It has got for its peace invocation

ॐ पूर्णमद पूर्णमिदं पूर्णत्पूर्णमुदक्षते ।
 पृथग्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
 ॐ शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति

to be chanted just before commencement and after completion of the parayan of this Upanishad. It is the very first of the ten classical Upanishads viz., Isavasya, Isha, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads, the significance and study of which is highly upheld and advocated by Sree Paramahandara in Mukti Upanishad. Only these ten out of one hundred and eight Upanishads have been commented upon by the Acharyas like Sri Sankara, Mahidhara and Madhava.

The very first line of the very first Mantra of this Upanishad commences with

ॐ ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यद्विद्य जगत्वा जगत् ।

and hence the significant name of the Upanishad *Isava-sya* just as the very next and succeeding Upanishad derives its name *Kena* after the very first two lines of the very first Mantra. The quintessence of this entire Upanishad lies in

ॐ ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यद्विद्य जगत्वा जगत् ।

and the constant brooding over this single Mantra Pada (line) will lead one to the highest state of cosmic conscious or the unity of the Self or Advaita Siddhi.

This Upanishad points out two paths viz., of knowledge (*Jnana*) and of action (*Karma*) for attaining the ultimate reality. Those who are on the *Jnana Marga* (path of Knowledge) are advised to renounce this changing universe, sentient and insentient, in order to enjoy the everlasting bliss of the Absolute and also not to hanker after the material wealth of others. And those that can not help engrossing themselves in Karma by their very nature on account of the admixture of the three *Gunas* of *Pra-kriti* are advised not to desert from it but to put their heart and soul and work for work's sake without any attachment for the fruits thereof. Moreover they should wish for a full span of 100 years so as to immerse themselves in disinterested works for achieving *Atma Jnana* or the knowledge of the Self through the purification of heart and thence of mind. By this is meant complete

devotion to works throughout the life or till the attainment of Chitta Suddhi. Sure are those with demoniacal traits to go to the infernal worlds or nether regions and those who care not for the attainment of the Self but for the world and its tantalizing charms. They are the slayers of their own Self (in a relative sense) which is indestructible in as much as by their very neglect of their evolution they degrade themselves to the lower species in the scale of the universal creation.

Atma is motionless as it is omnipresent. As such, the mind well noted for its matchless swiftness even more than that of an arrow or of wind cannot overtake It as if in a betting race for even before the mind reaches a particular spot Atma is already there because It is all-pervading. When the mind itself cannot even overtake or out run the Atman what is to be said of the senses which are characteristically subordinate to the mind? It is still more impossible for them. By virtue of Atman alone Mataravan or the cosmic energy or the Prana finds itself capable of sustaining the activities of the entire universe. Again Atma pervades the entire space and regions like the ether above and remains as a witness. Hence It is said to be passive or stationary. Because It gives a push to Prakriti or manifested Nature, that push itself is liable to be considered as motion. So It is said to move relatively though really It does not move. It is far remote for those immersed in Samsara on account of their continually being masked by ignorance and it is at the same time very near for those who get themselves

equipped with the purity of mind and Sadhana Chastash tya viz , Virecha, Vairagya, Shadampatti and Mumukshutwa and an aptitude for Sravan, Manan and Nididhyaan by the aid of a realised Guru. It is the sole prop or living principle pervading within and without the Brahmanda or Cosmos (vide Gita xii - 16). The wise one or the sage who sees all beings in the Self which is his own and who sees his own Self in all beings is free from hatred towards any being. Even so is he free from delusion or sorrow on account of his having realised the unity of consciousness which his own Self, which pervades all the beings of the universe (vide Gita- 6/29, 30). Atman is all pervading, bright, bodiless (i.e., beyond gross, subtle and causal bodies), deathless (i.e., perfect), pure untainted by sin or even of virtue, all knowing, all seeing, transcendent and self-existent. It has assigned the respective functions to the eternal creators or Prajapatis.

Again it is promulgated by the wise that one set of fruits is attained by those that take up Avidya standing for the age old material Karmas only like Agnihotra, Pancha Mahayajna, Jyotistoma, etc., and that an altogether different set of fruits from Vidya (Apara) representing the mere theoretical knowledge in relation to the above mentioned Karmas and desires. Both Vidya (Apara lower) and Avidya comprising the twofold aspect of Maya when taken up separately lead one no where and so for attaining the higher type of Vidya (Para) which too forms part of Maya a synthesis of the two i.e., of Apara Vidya and Avidya is advised for the proper and gradual

evolution of the undeveloped self. By worshipping Avidya alone one is cast into bhūl darkness for the reason that he gets to the Pitru Loka for temporary stay to take rebirth again into this mortal plane on exhaustion of the fruits of his Karmas. Into still greater darkness one is sure to be cast if he rejects the scripture ordained Karmas and develops the penchant solely for the trashy and unworthy theoretical knowledge otherwise going by the name Apara Vidya for this type of individual goes up to the higher regions of the Devas for enjoyment till such time that his fruits may get exhausted and he returns again to the mundane state of existence. Vide Gita 8/16-9/21. Hence is the recommendation of "the combination of Avidya (Karma) and Vidya (Apara knowledge lower or inferior) for actual practice. It is meant therefore that one can be free from death signifying thereby the bondage of Karma by performing Karma alone (like removing a thorn by the aid of another thorn and throwing away both simultaneously and enjoying perfect ease and composure of mind) and afterwards attain higher Jnana or Para Vidya (which also forms part of Maya) by the aid of the lower type of Vidya (Apara) and Avidya. By doing so one attains relative Immortality or temporary cessation of rebirth on account of his security of communion with the Devas.

Irrecording further a direct reference is made in regard to the Asambhuta which means the same as unborn Prakriti. Avyakta, Avyakrita or Avidya as also to Sam

bhuti which bears the synonyme Karya Brahman, Brahma Hiranyagarbha or Sutrataman or Vidya (Apara) By worshipping the former viz., Asambhuti alone, blind darkness befalls an individual and by worshipping the latter alone still greater darkness devolves upon him

Vidya (Apara lower i.e., Upasana) of the Sruti is merely a product of Avidya (Karma) Even so is Sambhuti (Hiranyagarbha) which is the offspring of Asambhuti (Unborn Prakriti). Hence it is to be realised that the sole worship of Vidya (Apara) neglecting the beneficiary overhauling effect of Avidya (Karma) or that of Sambhuti (Hiranyagarbha) casting aside the helpful identity with Asambhuti (Unborn Prakriti) leads one to greater darkness Here Vidya and Sambhuti bear respectively to Avidya and Asambhuti the same sort of relationship that does exist between the minister and the Rajah The minister is no other than the creation of the Rajah For obtaining favour from the Rajah in one's own private interests one should obtain not only the favour of the minister but of the Rajah as well Even so for obtaining relative immortality and consequently progressive emancipation i.e., absolute immortality, one should adore both Vidya and Avidya as also Sambhuti and Asambhuti simultaneously At this juncture the reader would do well to go through the relevant portions of Skandha II of Srimad Bhagavatnam to have a clear conception of the apparently confusing terms such as Vidya, Avidya, Sambhuti, Asambhuti, relative immortality progressive emancipation etc., related to the order of creation

Further a definite set of results follows in the case of the votary of unborn Prakriti whereas an altogether different set of results follows in the case of the latter namely, the Upasaka of Hiranyagarbha. The worshipper of unborn Prakriti, which is the sole cause of this universal creation, gets Laya or absorption or complete merging or identification therein i.e., in Prakriti itself while the votary of Hiranyagarbha obtains the eight Siddhis (psychic powers) viz., Anima (becoming extremely minute), Mahima (becoming extremely large), Laghima (becoming extremely light in weight), Garima (becoming very weighty), Prapti (the power of reaching any place or object), Prakamya (the power of having all wishes of whatever description realised), Ishitwa (lordship of the universe) and Vishitwa (the power to bring everything under subjection). As even the attainment of Siddhis is not productive of the ought-to-be realised Self knowledge but forms the sole cause of Samsara the worship of Hiranyagarbha is vehemently condemned as the gateway to greater darkness (Tamasa). It is worth noting in this connection that Hiranyagarbha is the effect or the product of unborn Prakriti alone. Continuing further it is said that in the interests of one's own spiritual acceleration, one should attach oneself not to anyone of the two but to either of the two, viz., unborn Prakriti and Hiranyagarbha. By contemplating on Hiranyagarbha first and thence on Prakriti one can easily get over the Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies of the universe by the aid of the former and attain perfect identity or complete absorption in the immortal by the aid of the

latter and be reborn in the next cycle as the presiding deity of a particular sphere of existence. One of a dull type solely and unavoidably interested in Karmas and Karmas alone should simultaneously take up both Vidya (Apara or lower knowledge or Upasana) as well as Avidya (Karma) and transcend Karma and knowledge (lower) by achieving Chitta Suddhi and attain relative Immortality or the union with the Devas. One of a moderate type of Vairagya, i.e., having neither excessive interest in the world nor the proper qualifications for Sanyasa, should stick simultaneously to Asambhuti (Unborn Prakriti) and Sambhuti (Hiranyagarbha) Upasana to achieve Krama Mukti through the deity he worships at the time of leaving mortal coil. Even the worship of Asambhuti itself is ignorance as in the case of its product viz., Hiranyagarbha. To deduce a more plausible meaning, Asambhuti may be taken for Vidya or knowledge (Apara or lower) and Sambhuti for Avidya or Karma for effecting the harmony between the two, i.e., of work and knowledge. In this case, the interpretation of the terms Asambhuti and Sambhuti given above has to be reversed. Such a person prone to have adopted a synthesis of Asambhuti and Sambhuti prays on the brink of his death, as ordered for in Jnanas' hands, to the Sun to remove the golden vessel from his sight so as to enable him to see the Brahman lying hidden or buried underneath Him (Sun) as also to contract His dissipated and powerful rays for his sake, for he has actually realised theoretically that he himself is the Brahman peepin, through the glory and grandeur of

His orb. Later on he wishes that his Prana or life breath may merge itself in the Cosmic Prana and his body may reduce itself to ashes through fire. In an all embracing sense, it may be inferred that the dying man wishes that the five elements viz. Earth Water Fire Air and Ether composing his body may get dissolved in their respective sources. As Prana is intimately connected with the mind and as both of them are interdependent and as the last and the ultimate final thought projection is held solely responsible for the rebirth in higher or lower regions (instance of Jada Bharata may be recalled in this connection) he beseeches the mind the fin de lord of the body and senses in a state of anguish and confusion and mental agitation to remember the record of his past good deeds done from the time of his birth right up to the dying moment. Fearing much of the probable awful and bad deeds which he might have committed knowingly or unknowingly he further prays to Agni the fire-god to forgive them and to lead him on to Kaivalya Mukti through the Karma Mukti Marga or the path of light and to accept his words of salutations as he is now unable to do otherwise.

To put in brief this Upanishad preaches that Jeevan mukti is reserved for Atma Jnani or votaries after the Path of Knowledge and Karma Mukti through Brahma Loka for those who embrace the Path of Action and the worship of Hiranyagarbha.

KENOPANISHAD

This Upanishad has derived its name 'Kena' from the very first Mantra viz., ॐ केनचित् पतति प्रेषित मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः । केनेपितावापमिमा वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क इ देवो युनक्ति ॥ with the use of the word 'Kena' thrice. This is the second in series of the well esteemed ten classical Upanishads, the very first and the preceding one being the Isaavasya which, too, has derived its name from the very first line of the very first Mantra viz., ॐ ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्या जगत् । It has got for its peace invocation

ॐ आप्यायतु ममाद्रानि वाक् प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमधो
पक्ष्मिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि सर्वं प्रक्षोषयिषद् माहं
प्रक्ष निराकुर्यां मा मा प्रक्ष निरुद्धोदतिगकरण
मैऽस्तु निराकरणं मैऽस्तु तदात्मनि निरते य इव निपत्य
धर्मास्तेमयि सन्तुते (सन्तः) मयि सन्तु ॥

ॐ शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति ॥

to be chanted just before commencement and after consummation of Paryayan. This is quite in keeping with the theme of the Upanishad which treats of Bhuma or Brahman. This Santipatha itself may be taken to give the gist of the entire Upanishad comprising four sections. All the four have got a corresponding note in the Sacral Mantra itself, which when ramified stresses the reminiscence of (1) the sound state of limbs (senses) with Brahman behind them all (2) the Omnipresence of Brahman (3) reciprocal and inextricable inter relationship between the



individual and the primal source or Brahman and (4) virtues or Dharmas necessary for becoming qualified for the realisation of the Infinite or Brahman

Moreover it may in the fitness of things be called the ' Brahmi Upanishad ' as there is a direct reference to the terms ' Upanishad Brahmin ' which occurs in Mantra 7 of section 4 to imply the realisation of the Absolute it deals with This is also called the Talavakara or Jaiminiya Brahmana Upanishad The Upanishad in question forms the ninth chapter of the Brahmana relating to the Sama Veda There is another Upanishad of the same name relating to the Adharva Veda Sree Sankaracharya commented upon either of the two As Sri Sankaranandaji Narayanaswami etc commented upon with notes glossary etc on the one relating to the former it is to be noted that the Upanishad connected with the Sama Veda only is to be taken into account as the second of the ten classical Upanishads

Now arriving at the Upanishad proper Section 1 deals with the nature of Brahman in relation to the organs of perception or the senses and mind Section 2 with a thorough and deep enquiry into Brahman for actual realisation Section 3 with an allegorical representation of Brahman in Saguna and Nisguna aspects with an ethical background Section 4 with the ways and means of becoming Brahman and the fruit thereof Sections 1 2 and 3 are in the form of a dialogue the first two between the Guru and the Disciple and the 3rd one between the Yaksha and the Deva



One as a close follower of the Path of Knowledge gets oneself equipped with Sadhana Chatuštaya viz , Viveka, Vairagya, Shadaiampatti and Mumukshutwa and goes with cent per cent Gurm Bhakta to his Gurm who is self illumined. Then he questions his Gurm regarding the respective source or cause behind the mind, Prana, speech, eyes, ears etc., that makes them carry on their respective functions. The preceptor replies thereto that it is the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of the speech, the Life of the life, the Eye of the eye etc., that instigates the respective senses to function and that the wise become immortal by not identifying themselves with those senses and by soaring above them. To cite an instance, the husband may say to his wife that she is the heart of his heart, life of his life or the soul of his soul implying thereby that she is the very essence of his life. Moreover the wife is dear to her husband not for the sake of her self but for the Self—the Essence in her which is common to both. Even so, the essence or the intelligence behind the various senses and the mind is the Self common in all that goads them to act in their respective field. Moreover, the finite, gross and impure senses inclusive of the mind are incapable of comprehending the infinite extremely subtle and pure Brahman and hence He is beyond their reach. He is distinct both from the visible universe and the inconceivable Avyakta (vide Gita xiii 13). The preceptor further continues that the infinite Brahman cannot be illumined (enlivened) by the finite speech, mind, eye, ear or Prana (breath) etc.,

but that itself illumines (enlivens) the body, the mind, its subordinate senses and the prana and that the worship of the mind and senses or of minor deities such as of Indra, Agni, Vayu, etc., to which the people of the earthly plane resort, is not at all the worship of the Absolute or of the Brahman. By this it does not mean that the worship of the deities or of idols is condemned. Vedanta is not at all hostile towards Bhakti, for the higher type of Bhakti or Para Bhakti and Jnana are one where both the Para Bhakta and Jnani see the unity of consciousness everywhere. The Bhakta feels himself to be none other than the tutelary deity he worships and he *is* his own self everywhere. Even so is the Jnani who merges himself in the thought "Ahm Brahma Asmi" or "soham". The inferior type of Bhakti or Apara Bhakti when fructified, leads to the higher type of Bhakti or Para Bhakti.

It is worth nothing in this connection that Mantra Nos 4 to 8 are the answers corresponding to the queries put to him by his disciple. To recall an instance suited to the present context just imagine a tongue cut, an eye plucked out, an ear scorched and a head guillotined each by itself or separately. The tongue, the eye or the ear ceases to discharge its respective function of speaking, seeing or hearing as the source behind each enlivening the respective organ with proper intelligence or power is severed i.e., defunct. Even so is the case with the head for it ceases to think and breathe as well. The active dynamic behind the head as in the case of

the said organs being rent asunder, it is devoid of mental perceptions as well as Prana. From this, it can be easily inferred that Brahman who is birthless, deathless, causeless, omnipresent and self sprung is merely a silent witness of the various activities of the body, mind and senses and that He is quite distinct from them. So He is the real unseen seer, unheard hearer and unthought thinker.

This is the only single section in the entire Upanishad that enables the aspirant to entertain and form a correct and proper view of the infinite Brahman.

The Guru continues to say to his disciple if by chance he is induced to think he has known of Brahman by the description made thus far he is entirely in the wrong for his comprehension of Brahman limited to the visible and illusory universe and Devas is too narrow and circumscribed and as such he should enquire further into Brahman. Then the disciple goes to a sequestered spot for practising Tapas, enquiry etc. and returns to his Guru after having reached himself simply to tell him that he thinks he has known of Brahman. He also adds he knows not too well and at the same time knows of Him too due to the infinite and indescribable nature of Brahman. Is he has realised Brahman or become identical with Brahman or become Brahman Himself how can he become the object of his own knowledge or how can he as a Knower know his own self? One can know and can describe the

finite objects by the aid of the mind and senses, but not so is the case with the Brahman or Bhuma which is infinite to be ascertained by the limiting adjuncts like the mind and senses. Moreover the thought 'I have known Brahman' never arises in the mind of one who has actually realised Brahman. So he says pointing out to his co-disciples that he (co-disciple) who realises the meaning of 'नो ऽ वेद' 'त वेद' as the real knower of self and the rest not. The meaning of 'नो ऽ वेद' 'त वेद' is 'I do not know and at the same time not that I do not know (i.e., I know and I know not. The preceptor then declares that the Brahman is known to him (i.e., sage) who says he does not know and not known to him (worldly minded person) who says he knows. The meaning of this is that the self-realised sage who has known Brahman never admits of his having known of Him due to His ineffable and infinite nature that is His self by transcending over body mind and senses and the worldly minded person ignorant of the true nature of Brahman boasts of his having known of Him thinking that finite and gross body, mind or senses is Brahman. The seeming paradox is thus to be construed for proper enlightenment. Such being the case Brahman may be considered to have been known or realised or intuited when He presents Himself as the witness of all states of consciousness. By virtue of the Self alone one attains spiritual strength which is the basis for spiritual knowledge and by the sole aid of spiritual knowledge one is eligible or fully qualified for Immortality. One is said

to have lived well or badly according as whether or not he knows and realises the Brahman in this very life. The ages of self-redemption see the one common Atma stringing the animate and inanimate universe upon Himself and realise the unity in diversity by soaring above sensual life and become immortal.

Section 3 gives an allegorical sketch with an ethical background. This is also in the form of a dialogue between the Yaksha (or the Great Spirit) and the Devas. It may be reasonably presumed that this Section might have been introduced with a view to suggest that (1) Brahman or Bhuma the Infinite and Unconditioned can assume the finite and conditioned aspect or state i.e. the Saguna form or to put in a nutshell Brahman is both Saguna and Nirguna (Saguna in His having appeared as Yaksha to Agni, Vayu and other Devas and Nirguna in His having disappeared from the sight of Indra (though Omnipresent by nature) (2) Brahman is all pervading and all knowing witness by the Will of whom everything is wrought out in sentient and insentient creation and the ideas of agency and proprietary right (ownership) should not be assigned to one's own self be it the Devas or some others for it is Brahman (Brahma of the text) that had actually caused defeat to the Asuras and victory to the Devas and that the Devas were merely instrumental in achieving conquest over their enemies (V. de Gita VI-33 for fuller illumination) (3) Pride or egotism or obsequiousness is bound to perish ultimately as in the case of the Devas of whom Agni and Vayu require men

tion for they could not discharge their respective functions of burning or blowing away a piece of straw when kept by the Yaksha before them (4) Brahman or Knowledge of Brahman cannot be attained direct except through a medium playing the role of Guru. This fact can be realised by the actual mental agitation of Indra when he could not find the Yaksha in His place but Uma the daughter of Himavan as a substitute. It is through Uma that Indra came to know of Brahman and His conditioned aspect in the guise of Yaksha. By the appearance of Uma on the scene it can be fairly taken to mean that she stands for Kshetra Knowledge or Prakriti and Yaksha to mean the Absolute in His conditioned aspect Purusha or Kshetrajna. Further it also conveys that the attainment of Brahman is easy only through Maya or Mother Goddess or Knowledge or Prakriti which forms part of and gets absorbed into Brahman for it is by the Will of Brahman that Uma the Goddess of Knowledge or else Knowledge Prakriti or Maya has sprung up just in His place. In this connection a question arises as to why the Yaksha who appeared to and conversed with Agni and Vayu should have disappeared at the sight of Indra the chief of the Devas. To this one may fairly conclude that Indra the powerful among the Devas was not in a fit position to receive the knowledge of the Self direct from Brahman. In this allegorical representation Indra stands for the gross or impure mind or the Jivatman the Devas for the senses (Indra is to the Devas what the Mind is to the senses Agni God of speech Vayu God of breath etc

and Uma, the daughter of Himavan and the consort of Siva for Knowledge of Self (Guru) However powerful and wealthy Indra be and however capable Agni and Vayu be they could not realise Brahman in His conditioned or unconditioned aspect but for the guidance or exhortation of Uma As Agni, Vayu and Indra and other Devas were boastful of their prowess in achieving their victory, it may be taken for granted that they were ignorant of a higher animating principle other than their own selves viz Parat Brahman and they were deluded by Moha or Maya or Prakriti that played upon them (6) Brahman, the only real entity in His unconditioned aspect is solely worthy of worship in lieu of that of minor deities like Agni, Vayu, Indra etc.

The parable as narrated by the preceptor to his disciple runs thus Brahman achieves victory for the Devas by defeating Asuras But the Devas quite deluded by Maya the weapon of Brahman think that they have won victory by their own mettle and that the glory of their conquest is due to themselves So Brahman, the Omniscient and the unthought thinker wishing to extirpate the sense of claim or doership and egoism in the Devas assumes by His Will, the form of a Yaksha or the Great Spirit and stands within sight of the Devas The latter get very much frightened and they ask one, Agni among them to go over to the Yaksha and ascertain His true nature Agni actually goes to Him and replies that he is popularly known as Itataveda etc and that he can turn anything and everything in this world on having

been questioned by the Yaksha. Yaksha then puts a straw before him to have it burnt. Agni tries his best to burn it but cannot do so as he himself like the rest of the creation derives his power from the Yaksha in His unconditioned aspect. So he bows down his head in shame and goes back to the Devas. Then Vayu is commissioned to enquire into the nature of the Great Spirit or Yaksha. On encountering the Spirit (Yaksha) he says he is widely known as Materiswan, etc. and that he can blow away anything and everything in this world on having been questioned by the Yaksha. The Yaksha then puts a straw before him for being blown off. Vayu or the Wind God fails in his attempt and so goes back to the Devas in utter shame like his predecessor. Lastly the Devas request their chief viz. Indra to go to find out His exact nature. But by the time he goes there the Yaksha is not to be seen and in His place Uma, the Goddess of knowledge stands. Indra questions her about the Yaksha. Uma then says to Indra that the Yaksha or the Great Spirit is no other than Brahman in His conditioned aspect and that the glory they had attained is mainly attributable to the Brahman who really won the victory for them. Through Uma, Indra now comes to know of the Yaksha as Parabrahman in His finite aspect and the glory of their victory is due to Parabrahman. As Indra is the very first to know of Brahman, he lets Agni and Vayu too know of the truth of the Spirit whom they had actually seen and conversed with. As these three are the first to know of Brahman, these are considered as having excelled the Devas who came to know of the Great Spirit later. Indra

tops the other two for he is the first to know of the Yaksha, the finite Saguna Brahman. To give a rough idea of Brahman to a dull-witted person, He has been compared to a lightning in point of splendour and almost simultaneous appearance and disappearance, for the moment a lightning flashes then it disappears. He has also been compared to the wink of an eye in point of an almost extremely minute space of time it takes for the eyelid to open and close itself. In either of the two cases, the lightning as well as the wink take very little time to appear and disappear almost simultaneously. Even so is Brahman that appeared to and disappeared from the Devas. By the virtue of the mind purified that one is able to comprehend Brahman within the twinkling of an eye or the flash of a lightning. Brahman is otherwise known as Tadvana on account of His being incomparably worthy of worship as the Atman behind animate and inanimate creation. He who knows Him as Tadvana and worships Him in the entire creation gains love and applause in return. Saying thus far, the preceptor adds that Brahma Vidya (Knowledge of Brahman) rests firmly on Penance (Tapas or Austerity), self control and disinterested selfless works and the four Vedas viz., Rik, Yajus, Saman and Adharva and six Vedangas viz., Suksha, Vyakarana, Chandaa, Jyotsha, Kalpa, and Nirukta form the bases for the attainment of Truth. He who knows this Upanishad thus, attains the Supreme and Absolute after having cast off ignorance which is the root cause of births and deaths.

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The Author

The beloved son of prosperous parents Sri V Subbarow (born on the 11th February 1922) grew up in affluence his parents giving him the training necessary to become a rich zamindar of Vizianagaram (Andhra State). The boy's introvert nature puzzled the family and in an effort to make him take some interest in the world they got him married in 1940. In 1943 he took his B.A. degree in Law from Andhra University and entered Government service the very next year.

Contrary to all their fond expectations the parents and relatives of Sri Subbarow found that this reserved young man who lived lost in a region far beyond their reach had within him the trait that struck awe into their hearts. They had him adopted just before marriage and as a result a change in name from Subbarow to Bismarow ensued. He had the Gift by Hand that never cared Unmindful of mounting debts he would give and give and would launch upon several spiritual enterprises. One of these was the installation of Santana Yoga Subrahmanyeswara in Sri Chandrasekhara Swami Van Temple at Chorukuganama Igaraham. He bought whatever spiritual literature he could lay his hands on.

This led him to the spiritual treasure trove in Sivananda literature. He got Sivananda's book *Yoga Means* in 1945 and this was only the beginning. *Six Ways for Success in Life and Philosophy and Teachings for our times*. He had found his Master! He wrote to the Master in 1948. Now the contact had been established. The Yogi Guru began to draw the aspirant disciple to himself. The disciple devoured the teaching of the Guru, he lived up to them. He established a Branch of the Divine Life Society too at his place. Finally on the 24th January 1949 he offered himself at the feet of Sivananda and was initiated into Sanjama on the sacred Mahanavratni Day (11th February 1949). Swami Sreenivasananda is an ideal sadhaka who is as much devoted to the Guru as he is to God as much to Sadhana as to study. He is a Professor of Vedanta in the Yoga Vedanta Forest University. This pamphlet is a summary of his lectures on the Isa and Kena Upanishads.